

VZCZCXRO4368
PP RUEHFK
DE RUEHKO #1281/01 0690329
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 100329Z MAR 06
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9588
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUYNAAAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA PRIORITY
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RHHMHBA/COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI//N541// PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/HQ PACAF HICKAM AFB HI//CC/PA// PRIORITY
RUHBANB/OKINAWA FLD OFC US FORCES JAPAN CP BUTLER JA PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA PRIORITY
INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 5059
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 8179
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1060
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 0920
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 7251
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 9239
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 001281

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR I/RF, PA/PR/FPC/W, IIP/G/EA, EAP/PD, R/MR,
EAP/J, EAP/P, PM;
USTR FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;
TREASURY FOR OASIA/IMI;
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA;
CP BUTLER OKINAWA FOR AREA FIELD OFFICE;
PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OIIP](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [JA](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION IRAN - TOKYO

LEAD STORIES: All Tokyo papers gave top play to the Bank of Japan's decision Thursday to end its five-year policy of quantitative easing.

1. "US, Iran Should Not Take Path to Confrontation" The liberal Mainichi editorialized (3/10): "It is worrying that the US and Iran are escalating their 'war of words' over Tehran's nuclear development and the two nations' policies towards Iraq. These two countries should not go down the path toward confrontation. Iran, which has failed to dispel international suspicions concerning its nuclear program, bears full responsibility for the international decision to refer it to the UN Security Council. Although Tehran has threatened the international community by suggesting possible retaliatory measures, it should work harder to resolve the standoff.... President Bush, partly out of interest in Iranian oil, was in his early days in office forward-looking about improving US relations with Iran. However, his 2002 State of the Union Address, in which he termed Iran a member of an 'axis of evil,' re-chilled the slowly thawing relations between Washington and Tehran.... The US launched the Iraq war following its attack on Afghanistan. It comes as no surprise that Tehran felt a sense of crisis after watching the regimes of two of its neighbors fall. One key to a solution to the Iranian nuclear issue may be mutual concessions between Washington and Tehran.... The US is unlikely to hastily impose sanctions on Iran. Vice President Cheney, however, stated that Iran would face 'meaningful consequences' if it continues to enrich uranium.... Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld is stepping up his criticism of Iran for interfering in the maintenance of security in Iraq by sending troops into that country. A continued war of words would play into the hands of US hawks and lead to an escalation of the crisis.... To

reach a breakthrough in the current stalemate, the US may require a different perspective. Is US 'containment' of Iran even advisable? Iraq's Shiites owe Iran for its aid in the struggle against Saddam Hussein. To help unite Iraq, which is on the verge of civil war, cooperation between the US and Iran is indispensable. Such cooperation would also help resolve the nuclear standoff."

12. "International Community Must Work in Concert to Resolve Iranian Nuclear Issue" The top-circulation, center-right Yomiuri said in its editorial (3/10): "The international community needs to urge Iran to stop enriching and reprocessing uranium by keeping sanctions in mind.... According to a report by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Iran began operating a centrifuge last month. This move flies in the face of international concerns. What Tehran should do first is restore its damaged credibility.... The UN Security Council is scheduled to meet next week, but there are some causes for concern.... While the US and European nations are willing to consider sanctions on Tehran to stop its nuclear development ... Russia and China remain reluctant to impose punitive measures. This international discord is one of the reasons behind Iran's insistence that it will never give in to political pressure or threats.... In order to avoid a nightmare scenario, leaders of the international community need to look beyond short-term interests and act responsibly. The long-term interests of the international community should be given top priority. Japan is continuing with its own efforts to convince Iran to abandon its nuclear ambitions, such as by inviting Foreign Minister Mottaki

TOKYO 00001281 002 OF 002

to Japan. Every available method needs to be used to persuade Iran to change."

SCHIEFFER